

## Compromise in Deforestation

The people of the world face thousands of issues to deal with. With economic, social, and health problems, the environment is often put at the bottom of the priority list of things to be concerned about. However, the environment plays its own part in affecting all of these types of problems. A significant environmental issue that affects humans is deforestation. Since deforestation has an effect on humans, humans should become more concerned and educated about its happening. Often times, people believe there are only two sides of deforestation – for or against. However, there is a grey area between the two that may be the best way to deal with this issue. Deforestation has many positive and negative factors for it to happen; therefore, it should be limited, but should not be completely rid of. Compromise between the opposing sides of deforestation is the key to keeping deforestation at the perfect medium of keeping the earth and economy healthy.

In order for any change to happen, some negative things need to happen. For example, as Robert Kates infers, even environmentalists believe in using biodiesel and palm oil plantations which both require deforestation (par. 4). A negative impact on the environment is needed in order to help another aspect of the environment. Although it would be undoubtedly ideal for there to be no negative impacts in trying to help the environment, it is necessary for some minor negative affects to occur in order for positive changes to happen.

The occurrence of deforestation is used in order to convert forests into agricultural or industrial areas ("Deforestation" par. 1). Agriculture and industry is a source of many people's incomes. Without this conversion, many people would be out of these specific types of work. There is not that much space to support so many farmers and industrial workers that support the people living in the world. Clearing of forests is certainly necessary in order to keep a significant amount of farmers and industrial workers providing for so many people dependent on these resources. With such dependence on deforestation, the country could fall into severe poverty without it. A newspaper in London pointed out that because of this unfortunate consequence of limiting deforestation, the government would have to reimburse these farmers in order to prevent the people in the entire country to become entirely economically unstable ("Deforestation Occurs" par. 6).

However, without proper regulation, deforestation can become out of control and leave negative long-lasting impacts on the earth. A research team for Congress says in their Congress Research Report, "Deforestation is responsible for the largest share of additional carbon dioxide released to the atmosphere due to land changes, approximately 20% of total anthropogenic greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions annually" (Sheikh et al. par. 1). More carbon dioxide is being released into the atmosphere than ever before. Also, a writer for *Current Science* says that cutting down and burning trees causes more carbon to be released more than transportation has (Josefowicz par. 2). So much greenhouse gases being released into the atmosphere can be the cause of the theory of global warming. Reckless deforestation without purpose is the cause of this. If deforestation is slightly reduced around the world, the amount of carbon being released into the atmosphere will be reduced.

Too much deforestation can cause harmful effects on climate, water quality, and air. Robert Chomitz, author of At Loggerheads?, says that trees improve the quality of water by reducing the sediment that appear in the watershed (124). Trees in the forests absorb the excess carbon dioxide that humans produce through industry. Without the trees, too much carbon dioxide turns into a gaseous state and goes into and stays in the atmosphere. Another problem is that the carbon emissions from the deforestation occur when trees and the forest's vegetation decompose or burn (Sheikh et al. par. 1). The deforestation causes carbon to be put into the atmosphere, while they are also the only thing that can absorb this excess. Also, respiratory problems can be related back to the smoke and smog caused by the burning of the forests (Chomitz 125). With low quality of water and air, many humans could become very ill and perhaps even die. However, deforestation can still occur to a certain extent, but with too much of it, the health of many people could become greatly compromised because of the effects it has on the air and water humans need.

J. Oosthoek writes about the evident fact that the earth has endured hundreds of years of deforestation since humans had interaction with their environment (369). Humans have cut down forests in order to have space for living, agriculture, and industry in recent years. Nothing catastrophic happened with this deforestation. With this said, deforestation can occur to an extent without ruining the environment or challenging humans' health. Slow conversions into a more modern world give the earth time to adapt to the changes happening. However, these conversions must be slow, or else the earth may not have the proper time to adapt and there may be a catastrophe in response to it.

Programs are being developed in order to begin a reforestation process. In other words, a reforestation process would be developing programs for planting trees where deforestation has

impacted a specific area. Conservation is being greatly increased especially in the Tropics, where deforestation has been very high (Sheikh et al. par. 14). These programs of reforestation and conservation are the beginning of the compromise process of the particular opposing sides of deforestation. Cutting down a forest can be permitted if the group or company agrees to plant trees to replace the forest that was cut down. Conservation in places that cannot handle so much deforestation anymore is another compromise that is good for the two opposing sides. With too much deforestation, the biodiversity in these areas will become greatly limited. Biodiversity is necessary even for farmers, because the forests sustain the lives of natural antagonists for the pests invading crops (Chomitz 111). Although this may seem like such a small issue, it can have a large impact on many lives. Without these antagonists, the crops will eventually be destroyed by the pests that survive.

Deforestation has grown into being more than just a simple environmental issue. It affects humans in many different ways; therefore, deforestation needs to be addressed. There are definite economic advantages for deforestation to occur such as agriculture, timber, industry, and living space for humans. However, with these advantages, there are also a lot of harmful disadvantages with so much deforestation happening such as climate change, bad air and water quality that can affect humans' health. With so many economic advantages, it is difficult to say deforestation should be completely ended. The disadvantages may one day overcome the advantages though if there is too much deforestation occurring. The earth has proved its ability to cope with subtle changes with little deforestation. The solution is to compromise between the two opposing sides for continuing deforestation in areas that have the stability to handle some deforestation, and to limit and control the amount of deforestation that occurs in every area of the world.

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